

# THE Spiritual Magazine.

---

OCTOBER, 1866.

---

PSYCHOLOGY; OR, THE SCIENCE OF SOUL.

TWO LECTURES BY EMMA HARDINGE.

---

*Second Lecture.*

SINCE it is your pleasure that the Discourse of last Monday night shall be continued, we propose to speak of that broader field of psychology which we assume to be occupied by the action of the spirit-world upon this earth. We must all have realized, in our investigations of modern Spiritualism, that there is a large amount of intelligence displayed at the spirit-circle which cannot be accounted for on the principle of human psychology, or the action of embodied "mind upon mind." The experiments of which I spoke last Monday night—popularly called electro-biology—are clear and distinct; they connect the mind of the subject directly with that of the operator. You will scarcely find a well-marked instance of electro-biology in which the mind of the subject does not immediately and simply reflect that of the operator. Those who are familiar with experiments in mesmerism, or what I prefer to call psychology (as distinguished from those practised for mere amusement under the title of electro-biology), know that the psychology which first operates through magnetism, and then by the action of one mind upon another in psychology, will often render the subject intractable to the will of the operator—in fact that mesmeric subjects sometimes pass beyond the sphere of the human operator's will. He loses control of his subject, who seems to wander off, either upon this earth, or in some distant sphere, where appearances of beings and scenes present themselves that the mind of the operator has not conceived of. I believe that in many mesmeric experiments, these results (though not always inevitable) are still sufficiently well known to experienced magnetizers to excite much speculation, and challenge deep enquiry; in fact these puzzling phenomena occurred even in the experience of Mesmer and his

immediate followers, and suggested attempts at explanation which cannot possibly come within the range of electro-biology to cover, or the philosophy of mind upon mind to account for. In experiments resulting thus, it was soon perceived that the mind of the operator did not invariably suggest the scenes perceived, nor always bind that of the subject. Somnambulism was suggested as the possible explanation of this phenomenon. It was said that "the soul could possibly perceive, and act for itself in prepared conditions, outside of the mind of the operator;" but somnambulism did not entirely meet all the cases observed. Somnambulism is, it is true, a state of magnetism—that is, it is a sort of magnetic sleep. This may be a state induced by external causes, by disease, or by some special tendency of the subject; but wherever it exists, somnambulism is not a purely natural sleep. It is a state in which the body is saturated with an unusual charge of magnetism, and the spirit is wholly unconscious of its connection with the physical system.

The somnambulist is unconscious of weight or density, and exhibits an exaltation of mental power analogous to that of the good clairvoyant. Still the somnambulist only conveys intelligence, which seems to be limited by the mind of the subject exalted to a high pitch, but does not enter upon the domain of what has been called the "supernatural." Whatever be the intelligence manifested, it may display powers and attributes of mind of which, in the normal state, the subject appeared wholly incapable. Nevertheless, somnambulism only carries its subject up to a certain point, but does not enter upon that description of intelligence which we are compelled to admit can only emanate from the "land of the dead." Ordinary somnambulism, like electro-biology, does not carry the spirit into Hades, nor give revelations of those who have passed from earth, and are deemed lost to its mourning inhabitants. It does not describe spheres, scenery, and surroundings which belong not to earth, nor discourse of those whom men call "laid away in the tomb." In electro-biology, the revelations of the magnetized subject are almost always limited by the mind of the operator. In somnambulism the intelligence manifested is obviously the mental power of the somnambulist in a state of high exaltation. It is very different in nearly all the phenomena of modern Spiritualism, which exhibits a range of ideas and treats of subjects of a totally different character to either of the above known states. Take for instance the whole of the physical manifestations—allowing for the possibility that some "unknown force," proceeding from the combined magnetisms of a circle of human beings, is able to produce the manifestations, granted that those who assemble at the spirit-circle charge the substances

around with their own magnetisms, then that their own psychological powers, unconsciously operating upon matter, shapes the intelligence that is produced; still this does not account for the whole of the phenomena. Its very origin, in this age, was outside of the combined magnetisms of a circle. The history of modern Spiritualism discloses the fact of innumerable manifestations unsought for, and of innumerable subjects of the manifestations captured and controlled by them, rather than seeking for or influencing them.

Out of the three thousand persons whom the statistics of the Western Continent shew to be now engaged as public or well-known mediums (an occupation that has only arisen in America during the last score of years), we may affirm that scarcely one per cent. of this number has courted the gift of mediumship or become its possessor through their own will. In almost every case the phenomena has been forced upon the subject, and the gift appeared to arise spontaneously; indeed, a careful investigation of the subject shews that, in many of the most remarkable instances of mediumistic power, the gift has fallen upon subjects directly opposed to its exercise. Now these are facts that the scientists and the so-called leaders of public opinion may ignore, but which the modest and candid investigator of psychological phenomena cannot afford to overlook. The proud one-ideal sectarian may choose to deny the entire action of a world of spiritual influence, save its revealment in one place, at one limited period, and to one special people. Except in the openly avowed or tacitly received evidence afforded by dogmas of some sectarian belief, "the leaders of public opinion" have not even the first shadow of evidence wherewith to decide upon the questions of human and spiritual psychology as the origin of the modern spiritual manifestations, because they repudiate the testimony of the only possible and reliable witnesses, the mediums and their experiences. These experiences, you will find by careful investigation, place the possibility of human psychological influence upon the origin of quite one third the manifestations entirely out of the question. One of the most striking evidences of this assertion will be found in the consideration of that feature of the manifestations which is called the communications of undeveloped or "evil spirits." Investigators at the spirit-circle are apt to repel the presence of this class of communicants. We pride ourselves upon being "seekers for truth," and desire only the presence of the good and the exalted, and we claim generally that "our own purity and exaltation of mind" should, according to all known psychological law, attract only the good around us, and yet it is a fact that the *good alone* do not come. The undeveloped, evil, and false are just as often present as the good; and this is some

evidence that we do not, as yet, know all of God's psychological laws, and that our own proud egotism stands in the way of thorough investigation; for, whilst we are driving back what we call the undeveloped and the false, we are not only repudiating our duty as guardian spirits to those beneath us, but we are also depriving ourselves of one of the strongest proofs we can receive, that our psychology and our will are not the authors of the false and deceitful manifestations we complain of. We have too much faith in human nature to suppose that men habitually practise deception simply from the love of the false, or that they would wilfully, while seeking for truth—while courting at the spirit-circle the presence of ministering angels whom they feel to be the mysterious links that bind them to the Infinite Spirit, come deliberately into their presence, and while proposing to commune with a power whose extent for good or evil they know not of, yet practise such deception as reflects itself in the communications which are assumed to be the action of "mind upon mind." And yet, if the psychologists are not the members of the spirit-circle, who then are they, and who are the authors of the folly and even the blasphemy and falsehoods which are sometimes given at such circles? Taking such communications as evidences of what the spirit-world is, and realizing that it consists of the evil as well as the good, they become phenomenal lights, enabling us to guide our way through the mysterious manifestations that have fallen upon us in this age. They prove, too, that we have waked up in this century in the midst of a world of cold, hackneyed, routine religion, with Sabbath-day observances and lip worship only, to find ourselves in the presence of a real living spirit-world; and instead of the doubtful testimony of the ages of antiquity and the beliefs of our fathers only, to find ourselves face to face with an actual reflex of this human world, and by the presence of the good and the bad alike, to realize for ourselves that the soul still lives, preserves its identity, continues its nature, proclivities, passions, and habits with its life beyond the grave: in a word, the infinite variety, as well as the strictly human character of the manifestations, proves by knowledge that which we have hitherto received by faith—the Immortality of the Soul.

It matters not that the press assails, the pulpit anathematizes, and the world scorns the manifestations of the spirit-circle; press, pulpit, and world cannot live for us, die for us, answer for us, or be responsible for the light which has come to us, but fails to illuminate others. With us, then, the responsibility rests of how to use and interpret whatever is strange and suggestive in the facts of the spirit-circle; and to the vast mass of revelation which is extraneous to our own will in the phenomena, I point, to shew you that there is, if we seek carefully, ample evidence

even in the communications of so-called "evil spirits" alone, of an unmistakable and disembodied intelligence, manifesting its presence amongst us, which is foreign to the experiences of this earth, or that of the circle investigating; and that, whilst many proofs of animal magnetism, and human psychology, are to be found, a vast mass of the phenomena transcends its power, and the limits of its intelligence to account for. But we must consider more in detail the broad foundations on which the philosophy of the relations of the spiritual and natural worlds subsist. Forget, if you can, for awhile your own special beliefs or special systems of religion. Assuming that none can be so specially favoured as to have all the truth, and none so utterly forgotten of God as to be immersed in entire error; remembering that your special form of belief depends much on where you were born, and where some special custom of opinion has been forced upon you; you may find in every religion something of truth and something of error, humanly speaking. Remember then only this night that every nation of the earth enjoys some religion, and worships God, "who is a Spirit," at some shrine or other. In all religious systems we find the belief in the incarnation of Deity, or "the Word made flesh." Question even of the earliest forms of worship—of those systems which in primitive ages must have been the inspiration of Deity to His untaught children. Ere gospels, creeds, books, edicts, councils, or priests existed, the soul itself witnessed of religion, acknowledged a spiritual cause and ultimate of being, and realized the action of a mighty though unseen God, permeating all life, and acting immediately by law through the grand phenomena of nature. To these ages I go, and I find there that the first feeble and faltering attempt of the human mind to conceive of Deity, represents Him as a Triune power, exhibited in nature. The Hindoo calls this Triune Being, "the Brahm," which fills all space; the Egyptian, "the Father, the Mother, and the Child, product of all being," whilst philosophy outworks infinite varieties of the metaphysical Trinity. And thus the nations whom we have branded with the offensive name of "Pagans," were the originators of the self-same idea, which, in our own fashion, we claim as a direct revelation of God's truth, in the form of the Christian Trinity.

The same universality of belief, manifesting itself in various forms, underlies other articles of religious belief, such as the mediation of spirits, the ministry of angels, the gifts of the Spirit to special individuals, the seal of "miracle" on certain systems of religion, and, above all, the presence of an Incarnate Deity manifested amongst men. When nations became the subjects of some great calamity—when human power seemed to fail, and super-mundane aid was deemed the only resort for

weak suffering man, he prayed for the coming of God's kingdom, and the direct presence of an all-powerful emanation from God to restore and redeem the race; whether in answer to such appeals, or as the order of God's providence in nature, it matters not now to enquire, certain it is that amongst all peoples, and in all lands, there have from time to time arisen in ages of dark superstition or gross corruption, men who appeared to move on earth as sublimely inspired teachers, seers, prophets, and sometimes even mystics, whose origin is lost in the dim night of antiquity;—beings who seemed to have stood between the heavens and the earth, bringing the precious influence of the one to the dark materialism and ignorance of the other;—men who in truth seemed to be "the Word made flesh." Martyrs too they were, who, living before their age, or in rebuke of its wickedness, were sacrificed to their divine mission, and generally perished at the hands of insensate violence; and afterwards, in the revulsion of the mad populace, from gratitude or admiration, received Divine honours, became the founders of sects, and were regarded as incarnations of Deity. Can all these beliefs, obtaining as history proves amongst every nation of the earth, be utterly groundless—all founded in error, falsehood, or superstition, and engross the credulity of the whole race, without some origin in truth, or groundwork of probability? It is a libel on human nature to assert this. It is a falsification of the spiritual experiences of ninety-nine per cent. of the race to gratify the egotism of one self-styled philosopher. Besides, that which we call "fancy, imagination, or hallucination," is still the reflection of some substance. Our mind may be a prism through which the rays of truth become broken and refracted, but there must still be a source for the primal truth ere it can be broken and refracted. There is an origin therefore for every thought, every system, however gross, erroneous, and superstitious; and this universality of belief in a Divine Incarnation, a belief (not, as I have suggested, confined to Christians, but shared in by all peoples of the earth) maintained and cherished by all human worshippers, must have some foundation for its origin, some original text in history for the multitudinous theologies that have been built up upon it. And yet when you question the reason or intelligence of the present age, you will find men manifesting a more violent spirit of partizanship on this point than on any other of religious belief. Some there are who totally reject the idea, others who accept it as the very linch-pin of religion, but only in their own peculiar sectarian form. Perhaps the truth lies in the realm of mediation between both opinions, and that one side believes too little, and the other too much, for the simple truth of all religions. The external forms of religion

change, but their fundamental ideas never disappear or lose their hold on the human mind. Age after age rolls on; the arts change their form and fresh sciences are developed. Continents recede beneath the action of the lashing wave, and islands are born by the upheaval of central fires. Cities are destroyed, mountains levelled, vast rifts tear open the hearts of giant mountains, and valley gorges are formed; the surface of the earth is torn and rent with fire and flood, storm and tempest, and eternal change. Geology tells us of far mightier changes beneath its crust than any which its surface presents. But in the midst of all this vast panorama of change, there is no death or decay in the spiritual nature of man, no footprints of change in the solemn temple of his religious being. The world of super-naturalism keeps track ever with the world of naturalism. The primeval ideas of a triune God—the soul's immortality—Divine inspiration from God in man making "His Word flesh and dwelling with men"—all these ideas, forming the fundamental basis of religion, never die. We call the old truths by new names, but the truths themselves change not. The variety is in our refracted vision, not in the eternal and ever-present spiritual ideas. Divine manifestations change their form, but never cease or die or fail, and ever come through a world of spiritual mediation, ever come through varying phenomena. We may wreath around the phenomena of spiritual communion fantastic myths and mystical figures, because it is of ancient origin, or comes with some claim of God's special favour; but search into all times and places and history, and we shall find an unity in every spiritual idea, and an universality in all religious beliefs, that point conclusively to a common origin inherent in the relations that subsist between the spiritual and the human worlds. And thus the idea of a Spirit-God is universal; and thus his revelation to man, though by some called incarnation, is, in God's inspiration to all his creatures, universal; and thus the eternal and unbroken harmonies that bind up the whole universe of being, from the souls of men to the highest angel and the Infinite Spirit Himself, unite all being in one continuous chain of spiritual dependencies and spiritual relations, known to us in ancient times as "magic," in sectarian beliefs as "miracles," in superstitious ignorance as "witchcraft," in modern revelations of spiritual power and influence as "modern Spiritualism."

Some of the religionists of antiquity taught that there were three hierarchies of angels supreme and mighty, who maintained the integrity of, and ruled by, mediatorial degrees throughout the universe. The first of these three hierarchies included three powers, all subordinate to the Infinite, called "seraphim," "cherubim, and thrones;" the next were "powers, virtues,

and dominions ;" and the next, " principalities, archangels, and angels." This belief prevailed very widely, and took such deep root in the earliest of the world's religious systems, that it extended from the philosophies of Paganism to some of the early theories of the Christian Fathers. The alchemists and mystics of the middle ages asserted that the last hierarchy included " the souls of dead men ;" but in whatever form the opinions of religionists represented the realms of spiritual influence that operated through the universe, all concurred in assigning this earth to its care and ministry, and included in its graduated spheres of active existences, the spirits of departed human beings. The Neo-Platonists—a sect renowned for the purity of their lives, and the spirituality of their teachings—assumed a spiritual origin for all life and motion, and asserted that suns, stars, and systems, worlds and earths, were all " Divine animals," endowed with souls and reasoning spirits. They argued thus: " Men are parts of this earth ; all things upon this earth are parts. The most perfect body is only perfect by virtue of a soul ; can, therefore, the large, the vast, the whole, of which men and things are parts, be destitute of a soul ?" Such are the broad views of psychology which these philosophical ancients took. We accept of their music, poetry, painting, sculpture, and classical lore ; nay, in our profound admiration for the wisdom of antiquity, we sometimes claim that man has retrogressed from their attainments, and mourn that we have no one in our own time as virtuous as Socrates, as philosophical as Plato, or as wise as Pythagoras. But when it comes to questions of philosophy or religion, we brand them with the opprobrious name of " Heathens," and deem their wisdom folly, and their virtue blasphemy ; and yet we have no system equal to theirs, in thus spiritualizing creation, and attributing to infinite spiritual perfection the existence of all things in being, from a dewdrop to a world ! With them the psychology of an all-wise, all-powerful and intelligent spiritual universe, corresponding to our material realm, was the satisfactory and philosophical solvent of life, motion, and intelligence. Compare this with our religious mysticisms, whose venerable dust we dare not disturb for fear we encounter the view of a corrupting skeleton where life ought to be. Our modern religious systems seem very like the dry bones of a past age that need the Ezekiel breath of prophecy in the form of modern Spiritualism to put life into them, and make them an army of living truths.

But, save in the matter of our own special beliefs, the past seems to most men now more like idle fables than parts of one universal religion ; and yet the question in true philosophy arises as to whether it can be possible that this natural world of



ours can exist unvitalized by spirit in every part. I believe, even from the very lowest clods of earth to the suns, stars, and systems about us, that all are full of spiritual life, and all harmonically related to each other by the fine but inevitable action of an eternally active and mutually related psychology. We know that on our own planet the force of the towering mind and mighty soul of man, making all things subject to it, is the viewless spirit within. Surely, then, since man and his planet is not the last or highest form of being—he and his earth must be the subjects of higher spiritual existences than his own soul! We know that soul is the motive power by which mind has risen from barbarism to civilisation. The history of the world and the records of the march of intellect prove to us that arts and sciences do not spontaneously grow up within us. We were not born with them, and only acquire them by painful and experimental struggles of intellect. What prompts us to struggle?—what suggests inquiry or stimulates us to search? We answer vaguely, “God’s inspiration;” but I claim that every living creature is a medium, a medium for the inspiration of some other living creature higher than the recipient, but yet not removed wholly from his sphere of action or sympathy with his nature. As the babe is the subject of the mother or nurse; as the young child learns of his teacher, the schoolboy of the professor and the man of the world;—so the totality of the race is the subject of the spiritual teachers of a higher and better world. And thus the truth of God’s perpetual incarnation becomes manifest, and “the Word is ever made flesh, and dwelling amongst men;” and that not in one form only, but in all. I believe, moreover, that every creature that passes from this earth becomes in his condition, degree and capacity a ministering spirit to the being related in the scale of creation next to himself. Nature in all her moods teaches us this lesson of relation, and every tree becomes a gospel of ministration. Behold the root producing from the tiny germ the miracle of a full-grown tree, with its branches, leaves, blossoms and fruit, and all its growth, being reproduced again a thousandfold in its seed. Shall not the human soul, like the tender plant, not only perfect from a germ the mighty mind, but reproduce its powers and spiritual life from its physical death in its spiritual birth a thousand and a thousandfold? And is it not ever so? Every child that passes from this earth is but a seedling sown in the mould of matter to germinate in a higher and better world. Whether for good or for evil, every soul repeats itself for ever on creation, and re-acts on the sphere of life below itself, whatever its nature may be,—and to the world of departed souls this earth is the next sphere of existence harmonically related to it.

The entire spiritual world, then, is the schoolmaster to this earth, and it is in the act of angelic ministry to this world, that the spirits progress from sphere to sphere, and ascend to higher and yet higher realms of good and use. And these relations and results exist—first, on the basis of the laws of being; next, on the love and sympathy of souls in all spheres of being with each other; and next, on the principles of justice. And besides all this, the love which urges this system of harmonious ministry through all realms of being is the direct influx of the God of all being, who vitalizes the universe, and is in himself all love: and hence the love of soul is the God principle that shall never be quenched so long as souls exist, and God creates them. The love of every creature is God-like and holy; whatsoever love we bestow upon another is, in our feeble way, a representation of Him who loves his every creature; and, therefore, I conceive that the expression of this Godlike and Deific principle can never be quenched, that it finds expression in the universal relationship, influence and sympathy that exist in every realm of being, and manifests itself in that Divine psychology whereby spheres and worlds act and react on one another. Can the grave extinguish love? Oh! never, never! It is the Godlike spark that redeems the darkest of criminal hearts,—it is the lamp of hope that shines in the dungeon of the lowest despair; and if there be no expression for this love beyond the grave, either the soul is quenched in death, or the life eternal is less Godlike and blest than the life temporal, of which Love is the sun.

We never find this dearth of love and sympathy on earth. Surely, then, we might in nature, justice and reason, hope that the love that binds up humanity into kindred ties, family relations, and the sweet associations of affection, must not only be preserved in the immortal soul, but also find appropriate spheres of ministry, and opportunity for devoted and tenderest expression. They pass from mortal sight, the loved and loving ones; but still, invisible as when it dwelt in earthly garments, the loved and loving soul is still the same, and its sphere of affections and ministry may be enlarged, but must subsist in heaven, or heaven is not its rest. It is in this unending ministry of love, then, that we know this earth is the subject of the spirit-world's psychology. Hitherto, science has informed us only of the human frame in its physical proportions. Man has been studied only in his physiological being. We have considered only the atoms, and speculated upon the marvellous machinery of the casket only: but who has searched into the physiology of soul, and learned to comprehend the real spiritual man within? The changing atoms of our outward form are not the real man! And yet we grope in the midst of their phantasmagoric play

to find out the motive powers of being, and leave the grand volume of our souls unread, and the wondrous physiology of our spirits all unstudied !

Why do not our scientists search into this mighty page? Surely our spirits live for ever! and for ever must we carry the signs we have engraven on those spirits in this our earthly career, unless a spiritual science can inform us of the spiritual system, and soul physicians minister to its necessities. Animal instincts guide us far in the care and preservation of our mortal frames, while the hindrances of society and national laws will not permit us to stray very far from the paths of human duty without recall; but where are the instincts to guide us up to heaven? where the code of laws to legislate for eternity? Both are in operation, but all too vaguely known—too vaguely told. Painfully groping our way amongst rival sects, and ever warned off from scientific investigation of our spiritual natures and spiritual surroundings by the spectral finger of mystery, we are invited to spend our lives in the study and care of the body that perishes, and are left wholly destitute of law, guidance, or science for the soul that lives for ever! I have spoken in a former discourse of the perpetual exchange of psychological power that human minds are exercising upon one another. Do you suppose that this subtler influence is less active when the mind is disembodied, and its force is operating from a world of spirits? Believe it not, or rather know, that the soul set free acts with a thousand times more power upon the realm of mind than when it was fettered in the prison-house of matter. Consider the potent tyrannies which human opinions exercise upon us here. How powerful is the psychology of fashion! We imitate the gay butterflies about us because our psychological natures cannot endure to stand alone, opposed to the universal realm of opinion that prevails around us. All this we see, we know, and we can deal with, because we know it. Recognizing the truth, we can even guard against the power of human psychology, but as we know not the existence of spiritual psychology, and its power is exercised upon us all unconsciously,—we can neither guard against, nor aspire to, the power that for evil or for good acts upon us. And yet consider the philosophy, the reason, justice, and naturalness of the psychology of the spiritual world for ever operating upon this natural world! To know the relations subsisting between these worlds is to unlock the great mystery which has perplexed and distracted our minds concerning the subject of incarnation.

Thousands, aye, millions, of lives have been sacrificed upon the altars of superstition merely to defend or repudiate baseless opinions, founded on beliefs which were not established in the minds of the victims, on the mysteries of "incarnation." Men

hoped to make their fellow-creatures by torture and by terror, if by no other means, accept that which they could not themselves explain, while the whole sublime truths of religion have been waiting for the advent of a spiritual science, which alone is sufficient to interpret its mysteries; and so men have gone on uselessly torturing and cruelly destroying each other, and all for the lack of that very knowledge whose study in human and spiritual psychology I am urging upon you this night. The philosophy of spiritual life, cause and ultimatum, action and re-action, explains to us the whole mystery of incarnation, inspiration, divine and evil psychology,—the influences of mind upon mind, nation over nation, and spirit upon mortal. The Divine Word through inspiration ever dwelling amongst men, and manifest in their hour of need, as God, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, a Divine and subtle influence proceeding ever from the Infinite, and God, the Great Spirit, over all, through all, and with all.

We may not know in our present rudimental condition of spiritual knowledge how the Great Spirit operates upon us, or through what lengthened chains of mediation his inspiration visits us. We only know it comes—comes in an universal realm of spiritual psychology. Perhaps it comes direct from archangelic beings who act as missionaries from the Most High to us. Perhaps God speaks to us through the warm impulses of human hearts, and human love and kindness. But why not also through the precious ministry of those we have known and loved, who have lived as we have lived, felt, suffered and endured as we have;—dear “dead ones,” who have fainted by the way-side beneath the bitter cross of martyrdom, and who best know how to strengthen the dying martyr, and uphold the fainting feet in the same rough path they trod? Why may not our spirit-friends be still permitted by God’s wisest and most merciful of ordinances to be the same beloved ones to us, though acting through the shining veil too bright for our dull eyes to penetrate? What, if they have passed beyond that flood, whose shining waters yet divide us from them? Can they not act as we do on each other by the ministry of psychology—by the power of mind, and the influence of magnetic *rapport*? Be assured these bright ones are not only permitted to bring us the sweet cup of affection, and the blessed ministry of kindness, but that they repeat again the mastery of mind that all can exercise upon each other, and inspire this earth with their views of those broader grander sciences which they have learned in the higher colleges of another world, and the schools of a vast eternity. It is from those ever-widening vistas of power and knowledge, light and information, that the flow of inventive idea

and brilliant inspiration comes. They are permitted, all of them, to be ministering spirits. They it is who in their totality are the "Word made flesh," and their thoughts as God's ministers are ever incarnate with us. Be assured that spirits of all grades of mind, virtue, and vice, intelligence, and ignorance, minister to earth through that psychology which I call universal inspiration. We talk of inspiration derived from the flowers, the murmuring fountain, the booming of the waves of ocean, the roar of the tempest, the sighing of the summer breeze; we gaze upon the solemn stars, and imagine we can study their shining sculptures by their "inspiration." And in all this we forget there is a mind behind the breeze, the storm, the wave, and flower, and star;—a mind that is ever speaking to us in the low sweet whispers of inspiration—and that mind is intelligence, and inspiration therefore is only the evidence of mind. It was mind that spoke to Newton as his abstracted eye gazed on the falling apple. It was mind that spoke to Galileo, as he turned from the scriptures of the skies to the mystery of falling bodies. It was mind that spoke through inspiration, even to the poor savage of primeval ages, and prompted him to search and investigate the world he had not tried, and of whose resources he was in ignorance.

It was the inspiration of mighty mind that compelled us to track our way across the pathless wastes of ocean, through which no human intelligence alone could guide us. No path was there—no man had laid down the map or charted the ocean depth—and yet onward man must go, for the whispering tones of inspiration said, "There is land there; there are new worlds for discovery—lands for conquest—elemental powers yet to be revealed—a great new hemisphere to be man's subject." We know not who speaks, but we hear, comprehend, obediently follow the voice, and it ever leads onward. That voice is the voice of earth; that mind, the mind that understands the earth. The missionary angels who have charge of earth are souls who grow bright, and good, and glorious, by leading other souls to God, and guiding them through that earth whose thorny paths they have trod, whose sufferings they have experienced. Where now are all the bright and beautiful of ages past—the mighty hosts of souls who have passed the mystic gates, but still live on and move and have their being, with burning hearts of love and minds of richest wisdom? Can they be lost to us and earth, and all they loved and lived and suffered with? Oh, never! We feel the impress of their divine psychology upon us. We know that they must still act out their every talent, and return it back to God with usury. We know that the spirit of impartation compels the poet to make sweet verses for the world—not for himself. We know that the musician is bound by the gift

of his sweet melody to bestow it on his kind. The artist paints for the race—not for himself. The writer is the world's, and not his own. And we know that this necessity of impartation is the voice of God commanding us to give again as we have received. Shall the freed spirit be exempt from this Divine law? Be assured, its continuity is unbroken by death; and hence, the glorious psychology of the spirit-world is upon you, and from thence are derived your inventions, discoveries, geniuses, and ever ascending spirit of progress. The master-minds of old are with you still; your patriots still labour for the land of their mortal birth. Nothing is lost that ever earth possessed. In heaven, the amaranthine blossoms of eternity may unfold; the root is still here in its birthplace, Earth. And yet there is a psychology—dark, baleful and pernicious—affecting man, that may not be overlooked, and as surely wells up from lower spheres as bright inspiration comes down from heaven.

As the bad man loves to tempt his companion to crime, so acts the bad spirit. The conditions of spirit life are still like mortal life, and the psychology of the undeveloped soul is as powerful for evil as the good and true for blessing. Our consolation is that, throughout eternity, progress still goes on; and hence, as the evil spirit can communicate and operate on earth as surely as the good, so, by our psychology for good, we may affect the spheres of darkness below ourselves as surely as those above can influence us. Hence, whilst we shrink back from the idea of unseen tempters luring us on to ill, let us remember that we may be guardian angels to them, and by our psychology elevate those who fain would drag us down. We have before reminded you that no spirit can successfully tempt us to evil, unless there is a magnet within ourselves that sympathizes with him. We may not know it, but as the seeds of all good and all evil are within us, so there are latent crimes and wrongs which may be awakened by some unhappy being who has sinned on earth, and, longing to repeat his earthly crimes, becomes attracted to us from some like tendencies within ourselves. But who shall be the conqueror? The question is, "Is our psychology stronger than his?" He or you must triumph over the other, and the law of psychology obtains between spirit and mortal as between mortals only. When we feel, then, mysterious promptings to do wrong, when the dark fiend of anger is upon us, or malice moves us, or the spirit of destruction is upon us—pause and beware! It is not alone of ourselves that we think or feel; a spirit is about us. We are surrounded by the psychology of another world, and moved upon by a whole spiritual universe.

Not in vain did ancient legends tell us of the "white

and black robed angels" standing on either side of every human soul. Think well of this—that you may be armed alike to aspire to the good and trample down the bad. Here, on this earth, are the foundations of all science laid which belong to us to know. Here, on this earth, is the battle-ground of all life and effort. To study the soul we must commence with animal magnetism, the soul embodied, and its motive powers, until we end with spiritual magnetism and its more subtle action. We must start with learning human psychology and end with the recognition of the same power acting on us from spirit life. If the soul lives it loves. Living and loving, hating and still in being, it must still operate upon us, either from love of the good or love of the bad that moves it. Even so then shall we find that the study of psychology carries us from the sphere of mortal life to that of spirit,—from the knowledge of the psyche within ourselves to the powers that enlarge their sphere of action in eternity. And thus may we realize that which is about us, and in our knowledge grow powerful to control it. The bright vision of the horsemen and chariots of fire guarding earth about were not only meant for the ages past, but still reveal the ministering angels who ever protect us. Angelic beings, who held this world in charge and guarded mankind in days of yore, are still with us; but, above all, nearest to our hearts in this the rudimentary stage of spiritual philosophy, is the understanding that our own beloved dead, our friends, our lovers, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters—all are with us still!

What though their forms lie mouldering in the grave?  
 What though their great heart-throbs are silent in the grave?  
 In heaven they are gathering—the great, the good, the brave;  
 And their souls are marching on.

Our patriots and heroes are soldiers of the Lord;  
 Our martyrs now are legions in the army of the Lord;  
 On to Armageddon with truth's sun-bright sword,  
 Their souls are marching on.

Aye, they are marching on, the earth's great dead;  
 On, on to glory: hear ye not their tread?  
 Loved ones, with angels at the bright host's head,  
 For ever are marching on.

Foremost they file where life's ranks of battle form—  
 Face with God's angels, where life's squares of battle form;  
 They tread in the thunder-cloud and charge in the storm,  
 Till they're conquerors, marching on.

On, till the freedom of humanity is won;  
 On, till the reign of truth and justice has begun;  
 On, till the warfare of earth-life is done,  
 And in heaven our souls march on.

---

*Question.*—What is the philosophy of spiritual possession?

*Answer.*—The philosophy of spiritual possession belongs to the subject of which we have been treating. On the last occasion when we met for answering questions, we alluded to this subject and remarked that the possession by any spirit of a human organism, and the subjugation of the will for any length of time can only take place in a subject who is mentally unbalanced or physically diseased. We believe it is not possible for any spirit permanently to possess itself of a human organism, subdue the will, and substitute its own for that of its subject, unless that subject be in the receptive condition of physical or mental weakness which I have indicated. In all cases of possession the operator must be positive, the subject negative; and, to maintain possession, the subject must be in such a highly negative condition as to render reaction difficult or impossible. Even in the most passive medium, or one whose mentality is least individualized, permanent possession cannot be maintained by a spirit unless the subject is in some highly abnormal and unnatural state. For one mind to maintain permanent control of another, is for one spirit to incarnate itself in that form, remove the will, and operate through the body as its own. Such a state is unnatural, abnormal, and a monstrous usurpation and abuse of psychological power on the part of the spirit. And we believe that it can never take place, until the mental and physical condition of the suffering subject is prepared for it. We would urge therefore that investigators should consider carefully, first, the physical condition of the persons said to be possessed, and next their former mental state. As a psychological effect is evidently produced, and the will of a spirit is operating through the subject, it is clear that the cure must be effected in part at least by psychological action; in attempting this, the laws of which we have spoken must be brought to bear, and philosophy requires that the higher psychology of the mind that wills to restore the subject to health and its normal state, shall be stronger than that which has for the time being possessed it. In this connection, animal magnetism as well as psychology must be employed. It is impossible that any human psychologist or powerful magnetizer can fail to operate successfully upon a subject so diseased, provided the magnetism of the operator is strong, and the will for good pure and powerful. A vast number of lunatic asylums are populated with cases of possession, rather than those of physical or even mental disease. In some cases, lack of individuality, or some slight disorganization of the system, has created a condition of receptivity to the psychological power of a bad spirit, and this



state is mistaken for lunacy. The whole subject is included in the philosophy of psychology, and is one requiring a far more elaborate explanation, study and investigation, than our limits will now permit us to enter upon.

*Question.*—The lady has referred to good and bad beings, or good and bad principles, in her lecture. Does she refer to them logically, or predicate them of individuals? Because, if individuals are continually dominating, good and evil cannot be predicated of them. We can only speak of good and evil logically as they influence others.

*Answer.*—Pardon me for saying that you fail to comprehend one portion of this discourse, wherein we claim that good and evil may not only be relative but absolute. Whilst we admit the dominance of mind both from the spiritual and the natural worlds over mind, we claim that the mind of the bad, or the undeveloped, or (to use the phrase in most common acceptation) “the evil,” cannot operate upon the pure and good without a certain amount of consent within the individual. We have claimed that though latent, perhaps undiscovered within us, the germ of evil is there, or the tempter could not operate upon it. Whilst we believe that we are all, more or less, the subjects of the psychology of others, we do not assume that man is a mere machine, nor forget that the spirit is itself an entity and a psychological power acting upon others, and therefore must have some relative position in the realm of good and evil. We are always changing, growing, perhaps, in one direction, or swerving towards another; but there is always a certain definite amount of good or evil in us which can be swayed so as to yield to the attraction of good or evil, according to our strength of resistance or attraction in either direction. From what we are, and from the point where we stand, we are to be measured, not from the point where another stands.

We know there is a great deal of sophistry abroad about evil being in reality only “undeveloped good;” but when we consider its results, and know that it is whatever is pernicious to mankind or occasions pain and sorrow, and that good, on the contrary, is absolutely its opposite, is that which is valuable to humanity and produces pleasure and happiness, we may venture to style these two different states or motive powers of the mind, “good and evil.” It is best to do so. We shall learn better how to cultivate the good and how to avoid the evil, when we understand the terms and what they signify. In the sense of right and wrong, then, each one is developed to a certain point, and, according to that, he is operated upon or impressed by good or evil spirits; but himself at last is the

battle-ground on which the struggle endures, and himself at last decides his own part in the war. We cannot except the war from the human mind itself, nor suppose that bright and dark angels combat thereon independently of the action of our own spirits. Therefore, we refer you once again to the assertion that inspiration acts upon us according to our receptivity to receive the good; and temptation to evil can only operate successfully on a mind predisposed to yield to it.

---

---

### BLIND TOM.

---

THE student of Spiritualism, it must be acknowledged, has an aggravating way of discovering traces of his favourite subject in matters which, to ordinary minds, afford neither evidence nor even a remote suggestion of it. A close observance of the intimate connection existing between the seen and the unseen, a certain knowledge of the occasional direct operation of spiritual forces upon the wills and actions of human beings, added to that curious habit of believing as possible in the present what others only think they believe to have been possible in the past, cannot fail to endow every "freak of nature," every new phase of human development, with an extra interest and a deeper significance for him, than for others. To him, the word "inspiration" is not merely a vague term with which to parry the scruples of objecting and puzzled bible-readers, but it is capable of distinct definition in his mind, and thus alone fulfils the conditions necessary for a real and sincere belief in it. He may, or he may not be right in his conclusions, but he is at any rate pursuing his investigations with an extra light, and an extra knowledge, and has a proportionately better chance of attaining to a true comprehension of all he sees and hears. Spiritualism may be a subject which a large portion of society would rather not know anything about, but it is certainly one which is ever rewarding the sincere students of it, with a new aid in their study of almost every other. Although strongly inclined to believe that those who have "found out" Spiritualism (with a different sort of penetration to that with which Mr. Addison and his friends are gifted) will experience an interest in the performances of Blind Tom, and see in them a significance little dreamt of by those who go to see him as they go to see Chang the Giant, or the Christy Minstrels; our desire, in drawing the attention of our readers to this musical prodigy, is rather to enable such of them as have not had an opportunity of witnessing his achievements to form their

own conclusions, than to insist upon any forced application of the principles to which this Magazine is devoted.

The fame of "Blind Tom," who has only recently made his appearance here, had already travelled to this country, and some years ago an article appeared in *All the Year Round*, describing his remarkable powers, and the sensation they have for some time created in America. The story of the way in which this "genius" first became manifest in the blind, illiterate, totally uneducated slave; how, arrested by the sounds of music in his owner's house, he unceremoniously ran into the room from which they proceeded and usurped the seat at the piano; how he then and there reproduced, note for note, the piece that had just been played, laughing and rolling his body in an ecstasy of delight at the newly discovered world of happiness then for the first time opened to him; has now been so frequently related that nearly all who have heard of the existence of Blind Tom will be acquainted with this incident also. But we should not omit to mention an interesting and significant fact related to us by a friend who was one of the first to witness and appreciate Tom's peculiar faculties. This friend tells us that on that occasion, for the first time, a composition of Handel was played to him. Tom immediately sat down and gave a correct reproduction of it, and when he had finished, nodding and rubbing his hands with an expression of more than ordinary satisfaction, he said, "I see him! old man with big wig. Him play first, and *me play after*."

The performances, as presented at the Egyptian and the St. James's Halls consist, first, of a general specimen of Tom's musical proficiency on the piano, as exhibited in his original and dexterous treatment of various well-known melodies and themes from the operas, and his still more marvellous execution, necessarily from memory, of long classical sonatas, or elaborate modern fantasias (by-the-bye we should like to see the musical professor who would attempt to learn by heart Thalberg's variations to "Home Sweet Home" with his eyes shut); after this, the public are invited to test in various ways, the remarkable acuteness of ear, correctness of memory, and power of imitation by which these results have partly been obtained.

Judging from the information afforded us by the intelligent guardian who introduces him to the public, we should say that Tom scarcely derives an idea, or takes cognizance of anything in the outer world, except through the medium of sound. The letters of the alphabet, the names of persons, various articles of furniture, his clothes, his dinner, &c., are all associated in his mind with particular notes, or combinations of notes, of the scale; and not the least remarkable of his powers, is that of singing, in a clear firm tone, any note or interval which may be asked for,

with infallible accuracy, and with a pitch that never alters. Tom's acute ear is not to be puzzled, or led astray by the most discordant combination of sounds. Strike the keys of the piano indiscriminately with the palm of the hand, and without a moment's hesitancy he will give the name of every note thus struck. Ramble over a number of chords in one key, and immediately afterwards demand any tone however foreign to it, and he will sing it with unerring precision. In fact every tone and every shade of tone, is a distinct living reality in Tom's mind, and it is apparently impossible under any circumstances, to make him mistake one for the other.

The sense of touch must be developed to an almost equally extraordinary degree, at any rate as far as his pianoforte performances are concerned. While watching the ease with which his hands sweep across the keys, pounce upon the notes high and low, and faultlessly execute difficult and intricate passages, it is almost impossible to believe in his blindness; and the strangeness of the piano seems to cause no appreciable difference in this facility.

The proficiency with which Tom imitates pieces of music after the first hearing, seems to vary considerably, and to depend more upon his particular condition of mind at the moment, than is altogether convenient in a public entertainment: at times we have heard him give an almost identical reproduction; at others, the success has not been so marked. In all cases he seems to be able to reproduce a general outline of the composition, however intricate it may be, and we fully believe that there is no piece that can be played to him which, after a second or third hearing at least, Tom would not make thoroughly his own. Whenever this part of the performance is announced, and any person from among the audience is invited to take his seat at the piano for the purpose, Tom may be observed to suddenly put his hands to his ears with a comical expression of mingled glee and apprehension. No doubt at times, poor fellow, his keen musical susceptibilities, render this the most trying ordeal of all.

There is something kindly and good natured in Tom's very grotesqueness, and by his simple expression of child-like delight, his eminently phonetic spelling, (which he specially glories in) and his many funny and unmistakably negro antics, he never fails in a very short time to gain the sympathy and favourable opinion of the audience. The sense of drollery decreases, and the sympathy grows in intensity, before the conclusion of any of Tom's entertainments. To see him, when left to wander on in his own way, gradually losing himself in that world of sound, cut off from which he could scarcely be said to exist at all; to watch how, while taking perhaps some well-known melody and weaving a strange garland of variation around it, the thoughts

seem to quicken, and flashes of a newly awakened intelligence change the ordinary vacancy of his features; to note how eagerly he tosses the theme from one supple hand to another, and seems to twist it and mould it from time to time into a shape of new beauty, without destroying its essential form; above all, to realize, as one cannot fail to realize after a time, how thoroughly happy poor half-witted Blind Tom is, and how far, far away his beloved *sounds* have drawn him from the ordinary associations of everyday life;—besides being eminently pathetic, cannot fail to arouse in the mind of the spectator many deep and pregnant considerations.

The startling fact of a blind uneducated slave exhibiting from childhood, under circumstances precluding all possibility of previous culture, powers which others are unable to acquire with all the advantages of study and education, will probably be dismissed by many—after the prevalent fashion of smothering every difficulty with a generality—by the terms “genius,” and “peculiarity of organization.” Admitting these, as far as they go, and recalling the well-known distinction that “talent does what it can, genius does what it must,” we think there are some among our readers who will be inclined to go further, and ask “whence this *must*,” whence the controlling, impelling power, manifesting itself in such various degrees at different times, which first led this child of slavery, untutored, blind, and intellectually deficient, to do at once, and without preparation, what others fail to do after years of labour and study—to seize and reproduce the musical thoughts of the greatest musical composers, to give expression to his own ideas, with an immediate appreciation of the subtlest niceties of tone and harmony, and to perform musical feats, in some of which, at any rate, there is no living professor who would be able to compete with him? And, while leaving each of our readers to answer this question in the mode most consonant to his own views, we repeat our belief that those who have condescended to examine the various phases of psychological phenomena presented to our notice by the study of Spiritualism, will find themselves possessed of an additional material for this, and all similar investigations, which they will be at no loss to apply.

H. A. R.

---

---

•

## SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS IN GREAT POEMS.

## THE ANCIENT MARINER.

By THOMAS BREVIER.

POET, prophet, seer, *vates*, are all terms devised to signify the conviction that those so designated were in the exercise of their gift in an exaltation of mind transcending that of the ordinary normal state. It was anciently believed that the gods were in more intimate communion with these men than with common mortals,—that the wind of inspiration swept through all their faculties;—that they were filled with a divine afflatus, which they breathed out to the world in song and music, in poem and prophecy;—that their organism was an instrument whose vibrant silver strings, touched by invisible fingers, produced divine melodies which thrilled and led captive the willing souls of men. Plato, in his Dialogue of *Ion*, says—“The authors of those great poems which we admire, do not attain to excellence through the rules of any art, but they utter their beautiful melodies of verse *in a state of inspiration, and, as it were, possessed by a spirit not their own.* . . . . . Every poet is excellent in proportion to the extent of his participation in the divine influence, and the degree in which the Muse has descended on them. . . . . For they do not compose according to any art which they have acquired, but from the impulse of the divinity within them.”

Men of the highest genius have the most deeply felt the truth of this early faith—have felt that their highest impulses and best achievements were not wholly their own; that it was their privilege to receive and outwork that which came to them from a higher realm of being. Hence, the ancient poets when they would sing worthily of some great theme, invoked the inspiration of Apollo, and of the Muses who—

“Round about Jove’s altar sing.”

Hence, our noble Milton, with a purer and higher faith, invoked the

“Heavenly Muse, that on the secret top  
Of Oreb or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,  
In the beginning how the heavens and earth  
Rose out of Chaos: or if Zion hill  
Delight thee more, and Siloa’s brook that flow’d  
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.  
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer

Before all temples the upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for thou know'st . . .  
What in me is dark,  
Illumine ; what is low, raise and support ;  
That to the height of this great argument  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men."

And he affirms that his "heroic song," was due to—

"My celestial patroness, who deigns  
Her nightly visitation unimplored,  
And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires  
Easy my unpremeditated verse."

So, too, one who in our own day has been a worthy successor of Milton—Wordsworth, conscious of drawing his inspiration from the spiritual world, thus lifts up the voice of invocation—

"Descend, prophetic spirit, that inspir'st  
The human soul of universal earth,  
Dreaming on things to come ; and dost possess  
A metropolitan temple in the hearts  
Of mighty poets ! Upon me bestow  
A gift of genuine insight."

We still speak of great men as *possessed of genius*, as *inspired*, though we may have lost the faith which gave these words their meaning ; but the great poet, musician, painter,—Dante, Mozart, Raphael, were they not in very truth, as Plato says, "inspired," "possessed by a spirit (or genius) not their own ?" When boys shouted after Dante in the streets of Florence—"There goes the man who has been in hell !" was it not true ? Had he not been in a very hell of strife and pain ? Had not his spiritual sight been opened to perceive "A Vision of Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise," as in a latter age was that of Swedenborg, who, in his *Heaven and Hell*, and *Memorable Relations*, has described the "things heard and seen" by him with a force, picturesqueness and moral grandeur, scarce inferior to that of the great interpreter of mediæval spiritual life and faith ? And Mozart, does not he tell us that the music he composed he first saw like a beautiful picture, and heard the different parts not in succession, as they must be played, but the whole at once ; and that that was the delight.\* So, too, Raphael, was he not "Clairvoyant in Art ?" Did not he see the visions that he painted ? Could these or any great men have given us their revelations, if they had not had their apocalypses ? Whence their marvellous intuitions—their "genuine insight," and thence foresight, if it were not that to them had been accorded from the world of higher intelligences—

The vision and the faculty divine ?

---

\* I have quoted the entire passage from Mozart, in my article on William Blake, spirit-seer and artist. *Spiritual Magazine*, Vol. V., page 113.

We talk of the poet's "imagination," as if that were a universal solvent of all the difficulty. But what (if we mean anything by the phrase) do we mean by imagination? What is it, if it be not simply the image-forming and image-reflecting faculty of the mind? "Imagination bodies forth the forms of things unknown," says one who possessed this faculty in its highest degree, and was no less philosopher than poet. We know that we can (as in mesmerism and electro-biology) reflect the images in our minds on the imaginations of susceptible persons, so that they will be ready to act them out as their own; this is the action of the higher or positive mind, on the lower or more impressible mind or brain, which for the time is thus operated on by a will other than the subject's own. But are we not all in different degree, thus open to the impress of the spirit world, and if so, is it not reasonable to conclude that the quality of the impressions thence received, will depend largely on the power of the imagination (as above defined) to reflect the images presented to it? We ask, then, whence come those images of immortal beauty which flow through the imagination of the poet, and are a joy for ever? Whence those majestic ravishing harmonies, that fill us with such wondering rapture that they form our highest type of heaven? Whence those deep truths which come to us in hours of meditation and soul-communion? Whence, if not from that causal, typal, thought-world, the source and fount of all beauty, all harmony, and all truth?

This view fully recognizes the varieties and degrees of character; it is only the truly loftiest minds that can perform truly loftiest functions. The instrumental uses we fulfil, and the inspirations we receive, will be in closest correspondence with our faculties and attainments, and with the ends to which we make these subservient.

Perhaps no man of his time had more of this gift of imagination, or more worthily employed it, than Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the poet-philosopher, our English Plato, as he has been, not inaptly, termed; none have left a deeper, more vivid, impression on the thoughtful mind of his age than he. Carlyle, Sterling, Maurice, Hare, Hazlitt, Lamb, were among the stars in the firmament of poetry and philosophy that revolved around him. He was "guide, philosopher, and friend," to the foremost men—the men who were the teachers of their generation, and who delighted to sit at his feet, and who acknowledged him their master. Great as his reputation deservedly is as a writer, still, it was more in speech, in free friendly converse, or in inspired monologue, to such auditors as those named, that the force of his genius was most fully felt.

His poems are small in bulk, many of them are only frag-



ments, yet, even in these there is evidence that he had felt the joy of

Inspiration's eager hour,  
When most the big soul feels the mastering power.

The realms "beyond this visible nature, and this common world," and the varied beliefs of ancient and modern times concerning spiritual beings and their relation to men, were with him favourite themes. He delighted to sing of pixies, fairies, demons, and elemental and tutelary spirits. Even for astrology he had a kindly feeling. He translated Schiller's *Death of Wallenstein*, that remarkable mysterious man, whose presence could bring an army into the field, and who was deeply imbued with a belief in the presence and power of spiritual beings, and who even, like the great Napoleon, trusted in his "star." In the following passage from this drama, Coleridge has expanded the text in translating it, and thrown in some of the finest graces of his own fancy. Robert Chambers says, it "may be considered a revelation of Coleridge's poetical faith and belief, conveyed in language picturesque and musical:"—

Oh! never rudely will I blame his faith  
In the night of stars and angels! 'Tis not merely  
The human being's pride that peoples space  
With life and mystical predominance:  
Since likewise for the stricken heart of love,  
This visible nature, and this common world,  
Is all too narrow: yea, a deeper import  
Lurks in the legend told my infant years,  
Than lies upon that truth we live to learn.  
For fable is Love's world, his house, his birthplace:  
Delightedly dwells he 'mong fays, and talismans,  
And spirits; and delightedly believes  
Divinities, being himself divine.  
The intelligible forms of ancient poets,  
The fair humanities of old religion—  
The power, the beauty, and the majesty,  
That had their haunts in dale or fiery mountain;  
Or forest, by slow stream or pebbly spring,  
Or chasms and watery depths; all these have vanished.  
They live no longer in the faith of reason;  
But still the heart doth need a language; still  
Doth the old instinct bring back the old names:  
And to yon starry world they now are gone—  
Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth  
With man as with their friend; and to the lover,  
Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky  
Shoot influence down; and even at this day,  
'Tis Jupiter who brings whate'er is great,  
And Venus who brings everything that's fair.

Though these faiths, in their antique form, "live no longer in the faith of reason," Coleridge evidently regarded the yearning of the human soul for a communion beyond that of "this visible nature"—a communion that should satisfy "the stricken heart of love"—a communion of man with natures kindred to his

own, as evidence that these fables were shadows projected from the substance of divine realities. In another poem, Coleridge strongly asseverates his conviction that our mortal life itself is no more than this :—

Believe thou, O, my soul,  
Life is a vision, shadowy of truth,  
And vice, and anguish, and the wormy grave,  
Shapes of a dream.

A few passages, from the poems and poetical fragments Coleridge has left us, setting forth and illustrating his spiritual faith, may serve as fit prelude to the mystic, wild, and solemn music of the *Ancient Mariner*.

In his *Monody on the Death of Chatterton*, Coleridge thus invokes the spirit of him, whom Wordsworth calls—“The marvellous boy, the sleepless soul that perished in his pride.”

O Spirit blest !  
Whether the Eternal's throne around,  
Amidst the blaze of Seraphim,  
Thou pourest forth the grateful hymn ;  
Or soaring through the blest domain  
Enrapturest Angels with thy strain,—  
Grant me, like thee, the lyre to sound,  
Like thee with fire divine to glow ;—  
But ah ! when rage the waves of woe.  
Grant me with firmer breast to meet their hate,  
And soar beyond the storm with upright eye elate !

The sixth of his *Sonnets* begins—

It was some Spirit, Sheridan ! that breathed  
O'er thy young mind such wildly various powers !

From a “desultory poem,” as he terms it, entitled *Religious Musings*, written on the Christmas Eve of 1794, more than one passage illustrating Coleridge's faith as a Spiritualist may be cited. Thus, after referring to the judgments which the French Revolution had just brought on the corrupt church, and at which

The mighty army of foul spirits shrieked  
Disherited of earth ;

he exclaims—

Return, pure Faith ! return, meek Piety !  
The kingdoms of the world are yours : each heart  
Self-governed, the vast family of Love  
Raised from the common earth by common toil  
Enjoy the equal produce. Such delights  
As float to earth, permitted visitants !  
When in some hour of solemn jubilee  
The massy gates of Paradise are thrown  
Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild  
Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,  
And odours snatched from beds of amaranth,  
And they, that from the crystal river of life  
Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales !  
The favoured good man in his lonely walk  
Perceives them, and his silent spirit drinks  
Strange bliss which he shall recognize in heaven.

And the poem concludes with the following grand apostrophe:—

Contemplant Spirits! ye that hover o'er  
 With untired gaze the immeasurable fount  
 Ebullient with creative Diety!  
 And ye of plastic power, that interfused  
 Roll through the grosser and material mass  
 In organising surge! Holies of God!  
 (And what if Monads of the Infinite Mind)  
 I haply journeying my immortal course  
 Shall sometime join your mystic choir. Till then  
 I discipline my young and novice thought  
 In ministeries of heart-stirring song,  
 And aye on Meditation's heaven-ward wing  
 Soaring aloft I breathe the empyreal air  
 Of Love, omnific, omnipresent Love,  
 Whose day-spring rises glorious in my soul  
 As the great Sun, when he his influence  
 Sheds on the frost-bound waters—The glad stream  
 Flows to the ray and warbles as it flows.

*The Destiny of Nations: A Vision*, is another poem by Coleridge, full of spiritual suggestion and profound philosophy. In this poem he expresses himself with marked emphasis, concerning those scoffing *pseudo*-philosophers, who

Themselves cheat  
 With noisy emptiness of learned phrase,  
 Untenanting creation of its God.

And he puts forward with evident sympathy that philosophy which represents the divine government of the world, as carried on by spiritual agencies—Monads of the Infinite Mind.

As one body seems the aggregate  
 Of atoms numberless, each organized;  
 So by a strange and dim similitude  
 Infinite myriads of self-conscious minds  
 Are one all-conscious Spirit, which informs  
 With absolute ubiquity of thought  
 (His one eternal self-affirming act!)  
 All his involved Monads, that yet seem  
 With various province and apt agency  
 Each to pursue its own self-centring end.  
 Some nurse the infant diamond in the mine;  
 Some roll the genial juices through the oak;  
 Some drive the mutinous clouds to clash in air,  
 And rushing on the storm with whirlwind speed,  
 Yoke the red lightnings to their volleying car.  
 Thus these pursue their never-varying course,  
 No eddy in their stream. Others, more wild,  
 With complex interests, weaving human fates,  
 Duteous or proud, alike obedient all,  
 Evolve the process of eternal good.

As in the passage quoted from the *Death of Wallenstein*, so here, even the legends of spirits, which “thrill” the “uncouth throng,” he regards as

Not vain,  
 Nor yet without permitted power impressed.

The rude superstitions of ignorant men at least are

Meteor lights, better than total gloom,

he affirms; and he tells us why:—

For Fancy is the power  
That first unsensualizes the dark mind,  
Giving it new delights; and bids it swell  
With wild activity; and peopling air,  
By obscure fears of beings invisible,  
Emancipates it from the grosser thrall  
Of the present impulse, teaching self-control,  
Till Superstition with unconscious hand  
Seat Reason on her throne.

A critic remarks on the above passage:—“Coleridge gives this credit to superstition, doubtless, because fancy, in its first exercise by the mind, peoples the universe with false and obscure fears of beings invisible. When it rises to a more calm and disciplined survey, the false fears vanish, but the beings (spirits) remain, made visible and beautiful to reason and faith.”\* Milton calls fancy “the eye of the soul;” but this, like the bodily eye, does not at first see things in their true proportions and relations; but what it conveys to the mind in its first crude exercises is unreal and false only as being exaggerated, distorted images of the true and real, seen out of their true proportions of magnitude and distance; and this is just the relation borne by superstition to religion.

Coleridge nobly vindicates the agency of spiritual beings in the larger spheres and crises in the life of nations and kingdoms, in the following passage:—

If there be beings of higher class than Man,  
I deem no nobler province they possess,  
Than by disposal of apt circumstance  
To rear up kingdoms: and the deeds they prompt  
Distinguishing from mortal agency,  
They *choose their human ministers* from such states  
As still the Epic song half fears to name,  
Repelled from all the minstrelsies that strike  
The palace-roof and soothe the monarch's pride.  
And such, perhaps, the Spirit, who (if words  
Witnessed by answering deeds may claim our faith)  
Held commune with that warrior-maid of France  
Who scourged the invader. . . . .  
. . . . . She went forth alone,  
Urged by the indwelling angel-guide, that oft,  
With dim inexplicable sympathies  
Disquieting the heart, shapes out man's course  
To the predoomed adventure.

It is to be regretted that Coleridge has not given us a complete sketch of the character and marvellous history of this

Maiden beloved and Delegate of Heaven,

---

\* “Beliefs Rejected on Realization.” By Carlos D. Stuart. *The Shikinah*. Vol. 2.

which his genius was so well fitted to illustrate, and which, so far as this fragmentary piece presents it, he, with "gift of genuine insight," has so nobly rendered. From the concluding portion of this poem, I give the following passage:—

"Even so (the exulting Maiden said)  
The sainted heralds of good tidings fell,  
And thus they witnessed God! But now the clouds  
Treading, and storms beneath their feet, they soar  
Higher, and higher soar, and soaring sing  
Loud songs of triumph! O, ye spirits of God,  
Hover around my mortal agonies!"  
She spake, and instantly faint melody  
Melts on her ear, soothing and sad, and slow,  
Such measures, as at calmest midnight heard  
By aged hermit in his holy dream,  
Foretell and solace death; and now they rise  
Louder, as when with harp and mingled voice  
The white-robed multitude of slaughtered saints  
At Heaven's wide-opened portals gratulant  
Receive some martyr'd patriot. The harmony  
Entranced the Maid, till each suspended sense  
Brief slumber seized, and confused ecstasy.

Coleridge further expresses and illustrates his sense of the connection between the material and the spiritual worlds in his unfinished poem of *Christabel*, a romantic supernatural tale, filled with imagery wild, weird, and beautiful. The first part of this poem concludes thus—

And see! the lady Christabel  
Gathers herself from out her trance;  
Her limbs relax, her countenance  
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids  
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—  
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!  
And oft the while she seems to smile  
As infants at a sudden light!  
Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,  
Like a youthful hermitess,  
Beauteous in a wilderness,  
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.  
And if she move unquietly,  
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,  
Comes back and tingles in her feet.  
No doubt she hath a vision sweet.  
What if her guardian spirit 'twere?  
What if she knew her mother near?  
But this she knows, in joys and woes,  
That saints will aid if men will call:  
For the blue sky bends over all!

This poem is said (I know not on what authority) to have been founded on a vision of the poet's. From internal evidence it may well have been so. But there is another fragment by Coleridge of the origin of which he has not left us in any doubt: it is entitled *Kubla Khan; or, A Vision in a Dream*. The circumstances of its production is thus related by himself:—

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effect of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in *Purchas's Pilgrimage*:—"Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The Author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm  
Is broken—all that phantom world so fair  
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,  
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,  
Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes—  
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon  
The visions will return! And lo! he stays,  
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms  
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more  
The pool becomes a mirror.

Yet from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, *given to him*. *Αὔριον ἄδιον ἄσω*: but the to-morrow is yet to come.

From this very remarkable and most musical fragment of a poem of the spiritual origin of which I think there can be little doubt, I present the concluding stanza—

The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.  
It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!  
A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw:  
It was an Abyssinian maid,  
And on her dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,  
To such a deep delight 'twould win me  
That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
Weave a circle round him thrice,

And close your eyes with holy dread,  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

But Coleridge's most remarkable poem, indeed, one of the most remarkable poems of any age or author, is, unquestionably, *The Ancient Mariner*. To a superficial reader, no doubt, it is simply strange and fantastic; but to those who rightly comprehend it as a spiritual parable, it is, like the *Pilgrim's Progress*, an allegory full of significance and truth in relation to the history of the inner life of man. Its theme is moral law and responsibility, sin, suffering, atonement, partial restitution, and the earnest of final victory. It illustrates the nature and process of evil, first within the soul, weakening its power, staining its purity, distorting its vision, burdening it with remorse, or hardening it into insensibility; and thence, as from a centre, working discord, antagonism, and suffering, which spread in ever-widening circles of outward environment; for—

Sorrow follows wrong,  
As echo follows song.

Throughout the poem we see the interaction and blending of the natural and the spiritual. As we read it, a sea of spiritual wonder and mystery seems to flow around us, as the sea flowed around the spell-bound ship. The story is told in the old English ballad measure, and in language to which an air of antiquity is skilfully given, in admirable harmony with the character of the events related. In rehearsing its leading passages, I shall, in parts, freely avail myself of a skilful exposition of it, which appeared in *Hogg's Instructor*, in 1850, understood to be from the pen of the Rev. George Gilfillan.

An Ancient Mariner, urged ever and anon by an internal agony, to make confession, meeteth three gallants, bidden to a wedding feast; he detaineth one, and begins his tale; the guest, against his will (he is next of kin to the bridegroom) is constrained to hear;—

He holds him with his glittering eye—  
The Wedding-Guest stood still,  
And listens like a three-years' child:  
The Mariner hath his will.  
The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:  
He cannot choose but hear.

The Ancient Mariner tells how the ship was cheered merrily out of port, and, with favouring breezes, sailed south to the Line, where a storm arose and drove it among the icebergs of the Antarctic Pole. No living thing was seen; solitude, desolation, mist, snow, cold, and "ice mast high" were all around:—

At length did cross an Albatross,  
Through the fog it came!  
As if it had been a Christian soul,  
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had ate,  
 And round and round it flew.  
 The ice did split with a thunder-fit;  
 The helmsman steered us through!  
 And a good south wind sprung up behind;  
 The Albatross did follow,  
 And every day, for food or play,  
 Came to the mariners' hollo!  
 In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud  
 It perch'd for vespers nine:  
 Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,  
 Glimmer'd the white moonshine.  
 "God save thee, ancient Mariner,  
 From the fiends that plague thee thus!  
 Why look'st thou so?" "With my cross-bow  
 I shot the Albatross."

In evil hour was this done; it was inhospitable and ungrateful. The mariners in their dreary, desolate condition, had hailed the bird in God's name, "as if it had been a Christian soul;" it had perched on mast or shroud, and had come to their call; it had shared their food and play; it had been to them a bird of good omen; it should have been safe and sacred with them—the memento of their danger, the symbol of their deliverance; still, the killing of a bird was apparently a trivial incident, but it was the perpetration of a wrong; and, therefore, in working out his theme, the poet has purposely made this the turning-point in the downward history of the wrong-doer; it is the seed sown by him, of which he must reap the bitter harvest; it is the beginning of his misery, and of the misery of those who approved his act, and in approving, shared with him its responsibility. All the suffering and remorse, and tragic incidents that follow, spring from this wrong. It "expands into world-wide dimensions, like the tree of the Chaldean king, overshadowing heaven—an upas tree, under which the Mariner droops and suffers, until 'a watcher, an holy one,' comes and cuts it down. But the roots of it remain, and his being is bound up with them in 'bands of iron and brass.' Shoots spring up ever and anon, suddenly, as the gourd of the prophet, but not for cover or shelter. They spring up as at first, only to eclipse the glory and beauty of the universe. Memory waters them, and preserves their fatal freshness. Consciousness gives them a fearful immortality. There is no absolute blotting out of what has been. Our actions are as immortal as our souls. They cling to us, and will cling for ever."

Mrs. Browning tells us:—

The mills of God grind slowly,  
 But they grind exceeding small.

And this truth was soon realized by the Ancient Mariner and his shipmates. At first, the crew looked for speedy vengeance to



follow their mate's inhospitable and cruel act, and in their fear, blamed him for exposing them to danger. Danger *was* near; retribution had already begun to take effect, but their presence and process were not immediately visible; and as the good south wind still blew behind, and the fog and mist cleared off, the sailors justified their mate, and so made themselves accomplices in his guilt. Still,

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,  
The furrow followed free;  
We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

Suddenly the breeze falls, the sails drop down, the ship is becalmed on the burning Line; no breath stirs, no whisper is heard other than the utterance of their own foreboding fears; right above the mast, the bloody sun looks down on them in blazing wrath from a hot and copper sky; water for drink soon fails them utterly, the ocean around but mocks and maddens them:

Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink.

Every tongue, through utter drought, was withered at the root; the very deep did rot, and slimy things crawled on the slimy sea; while the ship stuck fast,

As idle as a painted ship,  
Upon a painted ocean.

It began to be revealed in dreams to some of the mariners that this was not a natural calm, but that a spirit—one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet,—a spirit who

Loved the bird that loved the man,  
Who shot him with his bow,

had followed them nine fathoms deep under the ship, and that 'twas "he that plagued us so." And now, what evil looks hath the Ancient Mariner from old and young; fain would they throw the whole guilt on him, in sign whereof they hang about his neck the dead sea-bird he has killed.

So, each throat parched, and glazed each eye, passed a weary time; at length the Ancient Mariner beheld, westward, what seemed at first a little speck, then a mist, and, at its near approach, a ship. There is a flash of joy—

And all at once their breath drew in,  
As they were drinking all.

But horror soon succeeds, for at the close of day it nears them fast without a breeze or tide; it passes between them and the setting sun, and straight his face is flecked with bars, as if he peered through a dungeon-grate. It is a skeleton ship—not of this world, nor are its crew: they are but two—Death, and his mate, Life in Death, ghastly, with yellow locks, and skin as white as leprosy. They are playing at dice for the doomed men.

Death wins them all save the Ancient Mariner, and Life in Death has won him.

The Sun's rim dips ; the stars rush out :  
At one stride comes the dark ;  
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,  
Off shot the spectre-bark.

As above the eastern bar clomb

The horned Moon, with one bright star  
Within the nether tip,

four times fifty living men, one by one, dropped down dead.  
They could not curse the Ancient Mariner with their dying lips,  
for they were parched and sealed, but

Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,  
And cursed me with his eye.

And every soul passed him by, he tells us,

Like the whizz of my cross bow.

The Ancient Mariner in his agony is now alone, with no sweet  
companionship, no blessed sympathy; alone on a wide, wide sea:

So lonely 'twas that God himself,  
Scarce seeméd there to be.

Above, the burning sun ; beneath, the red, rotting sea ; around,  
the rotting deck, and at his feet the bodies of the dead men—

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,  
Nor rot nor reek did they.

And, oh ! more horrible than all was that curse in their dead  
eyes, which had never passed away :

Seven days, seven nights I saw that curse,  
And yet I could not die.

The many men, so beautiful !

And they all dead did lie :

And a thousand thousand slimy things  
Lived on ; and so did I.

I look'd upon the rotting sea,  
And drew my eyes away ;  
I look'd upon the rotting deck,  
And there the dead men lay.

I look'd to heaven, and tried to pray ;  
But or ever a prayer had gusht,  
A wicked whisper came and made  
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,  
And the balls like pulses beat ;  
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky  
Lay like a load on my weary eye,  
And the dead were at my feet.

This is the climax and crisis of his penance. We have seen the sin and its fearful punishment. It was not by storm or tornado that the albatross was avenged. The winds were still, the sea was calm, the heavens were serene ; but the elements in their quiet beauty were ministers of vengeance. The law of

gravity fixed the "idle ship" to the salt sea, and thirst did the rest. All the crew died, save him who was the chief sinner; and on him, as we have seen, fell the heavier punishment.

We are now introduced to the other half of the great theme—the mystery and process of restoration and deliverance. The solitary man, in the agony and crisis of his penance, cut off from companionship and sympathy himself, could feel no sympathy or love for the living things around him—for the creatures of the calm sea which sported about the ship. They were slimy things to him, crawling on a slimy sea, and he turned from them with indifference or loathing. Beautiful nature had no beauty to him; it was coloured with the hues of his own spirit; and the sky and the sea lay like a load on his eye and heart. For seven days and seven nights it was thus with him—a symbolical time, like the "seven times" of the King of Babylon. But as in that sacred narrative, so in this one: "At the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up mine eyes to heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me." So also the typical man of this poem. He lifted up his eyes to heaven, and as he watched the moon and the stars moving majestically up to the sky, their calm beauty fell like dew upon his heart. Turning from heaven to earth, he watched the creatures of the deep as they sported in the clear moonlight—

O happy living things! no tongue  
Their beauty may declare:  
A spring of love gush'd from my heart,  
And I bless'd them unaware:  
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,  
And I bless'd them unaware.  
That very moment I could pray;  
And from my neck so free  
The Albatross fell off, and sunk  
Like lead into the sea.

At this point the downward tendencies are counteracted, and the motion is now upwards. But, as there is a long and painful journey from those abyssmal depths, it is meet that there should be a little rest at the beginning of it. Accordingly, the Holy Mother (Protestant readers will not quarrel with this Catholic symbol in a purely typical poem) "sent the gentle sleep from heaven that slid into my soul." It rained while he slept; and while he slept he drank, and awoke refreshed—

I moved and could not feel my limbs:  
I was so light—almost  
I thought that I had died in sleep,  
And was a blessed ghost.

But how is the ship to be navigated from the far off "silent sea" to the home of the mariner? By supernatural agency. The dead bodies are re-animated, not by their own souls, but by a troop of angelic spirits, and rise and work the ship. The

Ancient Mariner himself lent a hand ; the body of his brother's son and he pulled at one rope, as they were wont to do. There was a strange pause in the work at the dawning ; the spirits passed away in melody through the mouths of the dead men.

Around, around flew each sweet sound,  
Then darted to the sun ;  
Slowly the sounds came back again,  
Now mixed, now one by one.  
And now 'twas like all instruments,  
Now like a lonely flute ;  
And now it is an angel's song,  
That makes the heavens be mute.  
It ceased, yet still the sails made on  
A pleasant noise till noon ;  
A noise like of a hidden brook  
In the leafy month of June,  
Which to the sleeping woods all night  
Singeth a quiet tune.

The lonesome and aggrieved spirit from the South Pole carries on the ship in obedience to the angelic troop. His fellow-spirits are heard by the Ancient Mariner (who has fallen into a swoon) relating, one to the other, the long and heavy penance awarded by the Polar Spirit, who, now satisfied, returns southward. The angelic troop continued to work and steer the ship, and there is deep significance in representing the Ancient Mariner as asleep through the greater part of it. He awakes : the original sin, though it could not be forgotten, lay upon his spirit less heavily than before—it was a reminiscence hallowed by the deep sorrow which had sprung from it ; still, it was indissolubly associated with later evil and suffering, and for *that* further atonement was demanded. The bodies of the dead men were around him—

The dead men stood together.  
All stood together on the deck,  
For a charnel-dungeon fitter :  
All fix'd on me their stony eyes,  
That in the moon did glitter.  
The pang, the curse, with which they died  
Had never passed away :  
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,  
Nor turn them up to pray.  
And now this spell was snapt : once more  
I view'd the ocean green,  
And look'd far forth, yet little saw  
Of what had else been seen—  
Like one, that on a lonesome road  
Doth walk in fear and dread,  
And having once turned round walks on,  
And turns no more his head ;  
Because he knows, a frightful fiend  
Doth close behind him tread.  
But soon there breathed a wind on me,  
Nor sound nor motion made :  
Its path was not upon the sea,  
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fann'd my cheek  
 Like a meadow gale of spring—  
 It mingled strangely with my fears,  
 Yet it felt like a welcoming.

It was the wind of "mine own countree,"  
 On me alone it blew.

The wind, say, of his spirit-land, which "bloweth where it  
 listeth." And now, "Oh! dream of joy!" the lighthouse-top,  
 the hill, the kirk of his native land, are all in view.

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,  
 And I with sobs did pray—  
 O let me be awake, my God!  
 Or let me sleep alway.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies they have animated,

And the bay was white with silent light  
 from their radiant forms. As the Ancient Mariner turned his  
 eyes upon the deck,

Oh, Christ! what saw I there?  
 Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,  
 And by the holy rood!  
 A man all light, a seraph man,  
 On every corse there stood.  
 This seraph-band, each waved his hand:  
 It was a heavenly sight!  
 They stood as signals to the land,  
 Each one a lovely light;  
 This seraph-band, each waved his hand,  
 No voice did they impart—  
 No voice: but oh! the silence sank  
 Like music on my heart.

The disembarkation and landing are as highly supernatural as  
 the rest of the voyage. As soon as the pilot-boat, provided by  
 the Ancient Mariner's heavenly conductors to carry him ashore,  
 reaches the ship,

The ship went down like lead.

On landing he is shrived by a holy hermit;—

"Say quick," quoth he, "I bid thee say—  
 What manner of man art thou?"  
 Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd  
 With a woful agony,  
 Which forced me to begin my tale;  
 And then it left me free.  
 Since then, at an uncertain hour,  
 That agony returns:  
 And till my ghastly tale is told,  
 This heart within me burns.  
 I pass, like night, from land to land;  
 I have strange power of speech;  
 That moment that his face I see,  
 I know the man that must hear me;  
 To him my tale I teach.

And to him that hath ears to hear and heart to understand, the

teaching of this tale will sink deep, and its farewell lesson be borne in his inmost heart:—

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell  
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest:  
He prayeth well, who loveth well  
Both man and bird and beast.  
He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small;  
For the dear God that loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.

So, chanting a prayer-song of love and sympathy for all living things,

The Mariner whose eye is bright,  
Whose beard with age is hoar,  
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest  
Turns from the bridegroom's door.  
He went like one that hath been stunn'd,  
And is of sense forlorn:  
A sadder and a wiser man,  
He rose the morrow morn.

If we do not share the increased sadness of the Wedding-Guest, may we participate in his increase of wisdom; and so, like him, profit by the strange companionship of the Ancient Mariner.

Mr. Gilfillan says:—

Read as an allegory, in the light of what we have called the central idea of it, all that were otherwise supernatural and extravagant in the construction and machinery of the *Ancient Mariner* becomes natural and true—true to nature and human life. For is not our life linked to the supernatural and based upon it? We walk in the seen and the known, but are swayed hither and thither by the unseen and the unknown. We talk logically of our human will and reason, our individuality and responsibility: but all our measuring lines are too short to circumscribe or to fathom the boundaries or depths of our little life. We are bound to earth, and controlled physically by physical influences from the most distant stars; and mentally we are weighed downwards by moral and spiritual influences which stretch from the beginning of time—upwards, by counteracting influences from the highest heavens. In such an infinite net-work of good and evil we live, and move, and have our being. We talk of our free-will and self-determination, and forget that true liberty is encircled by necessity, and lies in obedience to laws which stretch into the unbeginning eternity. The poem before us is a commentary on these laws—true *because* supernatural; true to the spirit's history *because* impossible as a narrative of outward life. Mark now briefly the infinite significance in the apparent disproportion between the shooting of the albatross and the retribution that followed. Here we have symbolized the first departure from rectitude—it may be a short step, only a hair's breadth; but it brings the offender within the sphere of influences which weigh from infinite abyssmal depths and towards them, from which, by his own power, he can never recover himself. Then how sure and speedy is retribution, though its first approach and progress may hardly be perceived. It did not seem to fall upon the mariner immediately he had killed the hospitable bird. The ship moved on, wafted by favouring breezes; but the avenging spirit was beneath it, and had begun in those southern latitudes the desolation which he consummated in the burning zone. By this we are taught that the evil deed was stamped indelibly on the consciousness of the offender. The natural laws were made the medium of retribution; and, translating this outward incident into the higher symbols of our inner life, we have presented before us a truth which runs through the whole poem—that the moral and spiritual laws are the ordinary medium of moral reward or punishment.

## SCEPTICISM MOST COMMONLY AN INCURABLE DISEASE.

WHAT is the reason, people frequently ask, that the present age is so determinedly set against the acceptation of spiritual phenomena, when attested by the most conclusive evidence, by facts that any one may witness? The answer is obvious. For two centuries the bent and course of philosophy has been to root out what is called superstition, and the learned and scientific having accomplished this object to their satisfaction, "Here," they say, "is a set of fools bringing it all back again. Miracles, wonders, popish hocus-pocus."

The feeling is very natural. The work of rescuing the world from superstition was a great and necessary work. The fictitious miracles of the Romish church in the middle ages, got up for the purposes of the basest priestcraft, had completely debauched the public mind, and confounded the landmarks betwixt the true and the false in the phenomena of nature. As education for the most part had not reached the lower, or very deeply the middle, classes, they were at the mercy of the priests, and were taught to receive their sham miracles at the cost of eternal damnation if they rejected them. Ghosts swarmed over the midnight landscape, and ranged in troops through every old building. The true apparitions were, in fact, lost in the concourse of the false; you could not, according to the common saying, see the wood for trees. Prodiges and monsters floated on the tide of ordinary rumour, as thick as locusts on a south wind of the eastern countries. There were warnings and omens in everything, even in the spilling of salt, and seeing a magpie. It was time to attack and root out this distempered condition of the human mind, and the Protestant Reformers set about it lustily. They thought, like John Knox, that the best way to get rid of rooks was to pull down their nests. They went further—they cut down the trees in which the nests were, and thus made it impossible for there to be any more nests there. But the devil is always at the back of the best and ablest reformers, and laughs at their deepest schemes. "Yes," said he, "cut down the belief in everything supernatural and spiritual, and you get rid of me. But as you can't do that, but live in fond fancy that you have done it, I can do much as I please with the world that you thus indoctrinate. Utterly casting out faith in the invisible, your own faith, such as it is, will be left lifeless. It will cease to have any but a conventional hold on mankind, and Protestantism will drift away into sheer infidelity, or will turn back, hungry for spiritual life, to the Romanism you have tried to quench."

The devil very speedily brought up the physical philosophers

to the aid of the Protestant Reformers, and the result is just what we now see—the prevalence of materialism in the laity, and of rationalism or pinchbeck popery in the churches.

The grand attempt to abolish superstition by the Protestant Reformers, was, in fact, ruined by over-doing it. They did as Christ warned his disciples against doing, they tore up the wheat with the tares. To get rid of superstition, they rooted out the principle of a reasonable faith; thus doing, they perpetrated an outrage upon nature, and nature was sure to take her revenge. She is now shewing the Protestants and the philosophers their error. She is resuming her indestructible rights, and where they have cut down the trees to get rid of the roots of superstition, she is causing others to grow in which the beauty of truth is fully manifested. "Now is my turn," she says; "you have destroyed superstition—my duty is to maintain the laws of life spiritual as well as physical, and to shew the eternal unity of the outer and inner world, which your overturned trees have obscured with their rotting branches. You talk of two worlds—of this life and the next. There is but one world and one life. Earth and heaven, time and eternity are one and indivisible. To use the language of every-day life—IT IS ONE CONCERN.

"All life proceeds out of the inner regions of the universe, and once given can never again cease. This outer world, as we call it, is but the protrusion of life from the great central reservoir of life into the regions of matter. Matter clothes the spirits who live in the worlds of matter, but the spirit in that material envelope is still in the spiritual world, is nowhere else, and can be nowhere else. It lives behind a screen for providential purposes, for a time; but the screen withdrawn, it finds itself in the same spirit world that it has already inhabited without knowing it. Though it has been for a time shut out from the view of the spiritual world, it has not been shut out from its influences. The world of life is ONE CONCERN. You have endeavoured to make it two, and to set up impassable barriers between the visible, and to us in this condition, invisible;—the outer and the inner. By this you have stultified your philosophy, and neutralized the benefits at which you aimed; my business is to restore the balance of existence. To restore the truths, free from superstition. That object at which you aimed, but in which you failed by overdoing it. In your zeal to mount the horse of truth, you have pitched headlong over to the ground on the other side. I now restore the spiritual world to its due place, by the strictly Baconian method of fact and influence. So long as men follow that course, they are safe: so soon as they adopt theory instead of it, and neglect or resist facts, they are lost to truth and all the benefits of truth."



This is the present language of nature, but it is a language most unpalatable to philosophers, because it reverses their indiscriminate decisions, and seems to rob them of their great triumph over superstition. They are gone as far wrong on one side of the highway of truth as their ancestors had done on the other. The past ages were sunk in the superstition of the marvellous—they are sunk in the superstition of the material. They have to learn the true distinction betwixt superstition and natural fact; they have to return to the only source of truth—examination of fact, and they cannot do it. Education—its pride, its formulas, its adopted dogmas, and its horror of the bugbear superstition—will not permit them. Some there may be amongst the sceptics thus produced who may be curable, as there are people afflicted by cataract who may be operated upon successfully; but the multitude of the confirmed sceptics of this age must die out as old men die out, and give place to fresh and more open life. Nature will continue her ever active and irresistible operations, and will lay by the materialistic doctrines of this age, as a stratum in her spiritual geology, and raise over it a layer of new life, new grass, new flowers, new forests of truth, for the sustenance and delectation of her more developed children.

Instead of feeling any resentment, therefore, at the stolid dogmatism, at the sullen hostility of the anti-spiritual press and the sceptical philosophers, let us recollect that they are but a fossilized generation, and that we can no more infuse life into them than we can into the Saurian tribes, or the conchiferous remains of our mountains. Who can feel resentment against an ancient oyster or cockle set in a limestone rock? Let us study them as curiosities, for they are such in a metaphysical point of view; and are capable of not only interesting us in our observation of them, but of teaching us the infinite force of an educational stereotype.

The sceptic with a character of scepticism to maintain, soon argues himself out of the most palpable fact, which is opposed to his theory. Sir David Brewster, as I know from a near relative of mine who sat next to him at Lord Shaftesbury's at dinner, after he had seen the *séances* at Coxe's hotel and at Mr. Rymer's with Mr. Home, and before the press began to gibe at them, expressed his utmost astonishment and conviction of the truth of the phenomena: though he was so nimble afterwards in eating up his words. Neither individual experience of the most positive kind, nor the united testimony of any number of most clear-headed and honourable people, can weigh a straw against a pet theory, especially when the Mumbo-Jumbo of the public laugh is behind it. Kant, compelled by irresistible

evidence, admitted in his works the full authenticity of Swedenborg's seeing the fire in Stockholm when he was at dinner in Gottenburg; his receiving the message from Frederick, so-called the Great, in the spirit world, and giving it to his sister the Queen of Sweden, and other things; and it took him forty years to reason himself out of these convictions, but he did manage it in that time.

I saw, on one occasion, at a Davenport *séance* in Hanover Square Rooms, a gentleman who was elected as one of the two committeemen and binders. Before his election he was very loud in his assertions that it was all humbug. When he got upon the platform he shewed himself the most incapable of committeemen that I ever saw on such occasions. As for tying one of the brothers, he scarcely knew an end of a rope from its middle, and handled it with as much *savoir faire* as a bear would a piece of Brussels lace. His duties were obliged to be done by his colleague; yet this fine fellow, on seeing a hand protruded from the hole in the upper part of the cabinet front, at once declared it a hand of the Davenports, "and no mistake;" he was with all his imbecility clever enough for that! Though the doors were instantly thrown open and the two brothers were found tied as fast as ever; he declared "it was a very clever trick—but certainly a trick; he could not tell how it was done," and here the whole room burst into a roar of laughter, at the idea of such a man wondering that *he* could not find it out. Every time he saw hands appear, though several together—five once, the Davenports only having four—and these hands nearly all of different sizes, and amongst them a woman's arm up to the shoulder—this fine fellow in great delight and with the most laughable pantomime, declared them all to a certainty the hands of the Davenports, he could swear to them! The roars of merriment at the exhibitions made by this poor creature were continuous and extatic. He was invited to enter the cabinet; but though he still pretended it was only a trick, and there was nothing there but the Davenports, not all the calls from the audience for him to go in, could induce him to enter. He kept at a safe distance from the cabinet, evidently believing that, though he said there was nothing but a clever trick there, the devil at least was in it.

Most ludicrous as was the conduct of this poor fellow, it was not worse than that of the English press from the highest to the lowest organs of it. They are every day, and have been so these two years, declaring that Spiritualism is all humbug, and yet none of them dare go near it to see for themselves. A silly story, such as that Mr. Fay, who had been all the time in Europe with the Davenports, had been for some time in America ex-

posing the impositions of the Davenports, was gladly credited by them. The Davenports, they said again, had confessed themselves conjurors. This the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Star* and its "Flaneur"—this the *Athenæum* gravely asserted. Well, there were the Davenports, and there was Mr. Fay in London, to be found almost every evening at the Hanover Square Rooms, and the editors of these journals could go and learn the truth at once at the fountain head. They could say, "Are you the Mr. Fay who is said to be in America at this moment, exposing the tricks of the Davenports? You may think it a silly question, as we see you are here, but as very unwelcome facts have sprung up of late, we don't believe in our own senses, and so are obliged to come and ask you if you believe in yours."

They could have said to the Davenports, "Do you then confess yourselves conjurors? for we are so bent on stating the truth only in our communications to the public, that we spare no pains to ascertain it." They could have done this. Why did they not? They could have asked such questions—why did they not? The answer is to be found in the fact that it is almost impossible to lay down the fallacies of education, especially when their interest lies the other way, and a whole generation, proud of its classical and philosophical accomplishments, to confess itself in error, and to have to begin and learn anew of those whom they have treated as fools and fanatics. This has been the case in every advancing age. The new step has been found too difficult for the limbs grown already old. Jesus Christ could not persuade the Scribes and Pharisees to become as little children, and learn of a carpenter's son, and a dozen of fishermen and tax gatherers, the grand intellectual truths on which the world now prides itself. Galileo and Copernicus, Franklin and Jenner, were in the same position. It is our turn now, and it will be true of the first movers in every future age, who are willing to adopt a new truth just rising above the horizon of the epoch. There are still transatlantic lands in the regions of knowledge which will require all the fortitude of new Columbuses to reach through the scorn and repugnances of the time. There are antipodes yet in the spiritual world that only a Dampier or a Cooke can lead the way to. The world at large could never dream of them, or find them when their existence was demonstrated. There is nothing peculiar in the conditions of Spiritualism, they are the inevitable conditions of a truth's infancy. It will outgrow them, and in the universal honour and acceptance of its manhood will see truth raking some new jewels from the sink of the age's foul ignorance, amid the hootings of the learned stereotypes.

## SPIRITUALISM BEFORE THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

---

AT the recent meeting of the British Association, at Nottingham, in Section E. (Geography and Ethnology), Sir Walter Eliot, K.C.B., read a paper, "On a proposed Ethnological Congress at Calcutta." It gives some curious and highly interesting facts concerning a low kind of Pagan Spiritualism which has existed for ages and still prevails among the people of South-Eastern Asia. Such facts throw considerable light on the origin of idolatry, and of heathen superstitions generally. It has been our aim in this Magazine to shew that Spiritualism is interwoven with the whole range of religious belief and practice, from its lowest types to the very highest of which man is capable. It is in the highest degree important and instructive to understand it in all its forms. The corrupt phase of it laid by Sir Walter Eliot, K.C.B., before the British Association, is evidence of how degraded may be a kind of Spiritualism when not penetrated and pervaded by that divine element and force inseparable from its higher manifestations, and which is the life and soul of religion in its purity and truth.

Sir Walter Eliot, in the course of his observations on the population of India, and of the means of instituting comparison between the different sections of it, remarked :—

"The earliest people of whom there is any record are known only by name. *Piaschi*, the received name for a demon or evil spirit, is alluded to by the early southern grammarians as the dialect of an ancient people, which has long disappeared . . . . A test for identifying the numerous sections or tribes of aboriginal descent is found in the system of religious belief common to all. They worship the spirits of deceased persons; of their parents or ancestors as beneficent beings;—of men who had been conspicuous in life for crime or misfortune as malevolent influences. This has been called 'Devil Worship' by the missionaries of Southern India and Ceylon, but might more correctly be termed demonolatry, or rather daimonolatry. The spirits of ancestors are the household gods. The evil spirits are worshipped in public in the temples, and obtain the greatest amount of devotion from the fears of their votaries. When the priest consults the *Pey*, or spirit, he makes a blood offering, then works himself into a state of excitement by singing, dancing, and whirling round, till he becomes possessed of the spirit and falls down foaming in a trance. On his recovery he communicates the information he has received. Possession by the *daimon* is not confined to the priests. Persons who have injured others are often possessed by

the spirit of a dead enemy, whom they personate, denying their own identity, and denouncing their own crime.

"The *Pey* of the South is the same as the *Bhuta* and *Dankin* of the North, and there is a treatise by a native of Guzerat, which is a curious collection of stories of demons in that part of India. The superstition is evidently derived from Shamanissar of their Tartar ancestors.

"Connected in some degree with this belief, but possessing features referring to a still earlier superstition, is the worship of the village goddess, the tutelary deity of the township, universal throughout the south of India, and which will probably be found to prevail in the north. An annual or occasional festival is held in her honour to procure fertility to the soil, to secure immunity from small-pox, cholera, or other epidemics, or generally to promote the prosperity of the community. It continues for several days under the direction of the Pariahs and servile classes, who are the officiating priests, during which all caste restrictions cease, and they mix freely with the higher classes, who at other times would be polluted by their approach. The principal feature of the ceremony is the sacrifice of a pampered buffalo bull on the third or fourth day, which had been devoted as a calf, and had been allowed to pasture at will over the whole village lands without molestation. One of the chief officiators is called the *Petraj*, an hereditary office. One part of the ceremony in which he takes a leading part is very remarkable. About the middle of the feast, he selects a young kid, which he mesmerises by repeated passes, and when it becomes motionless and rigid he carries it on the palm of his hand round the crowd, who believe it to be possessed, and then lays it on the ground, still insensible. Next, he himself, or one of his family (for the office is hereditary) is prostrated before the image of the goddess, his hands tied firmly behind his back, and he is worked into a state of violent excitement with songs, dancing, and rapid gyrations. Soon the goddess enters into him, and with eyes rolling, his long hair loose over his shoulders, he falls on the kid like a wild beast, and tears at it with his teeth until he eats into its throat. Covered with blood, a horrid spectacle, he is again presented to the goddess, together with the mangled victim, and his arms are set free.

"The buffalo is sacrificed towards the close of the festival, his head being struck off with one blow by the national weapon, or *korgathe*,—a feat, the successful performance of which enhances the merit of the offering. The carcase is then cut into pieces, and each ryot or cultivator receives a portion to bury in his field.

"The *Petraj* next lifts the head of the buffalo on to his own head, and leads a procession of the whole community, preceded

by drums, tom-toms, and horns, round the boundaries of the village lands, his assistants scattering prepared food called *bhubballi*, on either hand, as they walk along, to propitiate the evil spirits. The whole proceeding is carefully guarded by armed men with drawn swords, to exclude intruders. For if a stranger could succeed in abstracting a bit of the flesh and should carry it off to his own village, the whole merit of the sacrifice would be transferred to it. Instances of this having happened are not unknown, ending in violent contest and bloodshed.

"Great numbers of sheep, goats, and buffaloes are immolated by individuals as voluntary offerings during the ceremony, and their heads piled up in heaps before the temple. The last day is a scene of general license and disorder. The Pariahs and lower castes pelt each other with the half-putrid heads of the victims, which are flung indiscriminately at Brahmins or outcasts, masters, or servants, and the ceremony closes by burying the buffalo's head in front of the temple.

"This rite seems to carry us back to a time when the now oppressed servile classes were the predominant race, and when their conquerors found it politic or advisable, or even necessary to adopt some of the most cherished practices of the vanquished. But it likewise points to a belief more ancient still—to that worship of the powers of nature, which seems to have been the oldest of all superstitions, and which still exists in the Meriah sacrifice to the earth-goddess, practised by the Khonds of Orissa. The striking resemblance between the use made of the buffalo flesh offered to the village goddess and that of the Meriah, or human victim sacrificed to the earth goddess, affords room for inferring that the servile classes adopted that rite, from a still earlier people of the same races as the Khonds. Certain it is that these Meriah sacrificing tribes have not hitherto been identified with any existing race. Their language contains Tamil roots sufficient to stamp it as of Turanian origin, but in all other respects differs greatly from the Tamil type, while their manners and customs, as described by General Campbell, shew little resemblance to those of the servile classes. We know from Ctrseas, whose *Indiana* was written about 400 B. C., that the practice of human sacrifices was then believed to be general throughout India. Now it is a remarkable fact, that when such offerings were interdicted within the British districts of Goomsoor, a few years ago, the Khonds besought General Campbell to permit the sacrifice of a buffalo, with the Meriah rites, lest the earth goddess should strike their fields with sterility."

---

## JOHN PIERPONT.

THIS eminent and venerable man, known—by name, at least—on both sides of the Atlantic, as preacher, orator, poet, scholar, patriot, reformer, and philanthropist, peaceably passed from the scene of his earthly labours to the better life, on Monday, August 27th, at the ripe age of eighty-one. The editor of the *Banner of Light*, in an obituary notice, remarks:—"His career embraced almost every department of action that could give a man confidence, and develop the courage and the strength of manhood that is in him. He was a reformer, a man of ideas, a lover of truth wherever found, impervious to the bugbear of social fear, brave and tender, strong and feminine, tenacious of his opinions, overflowing with charity, and full of a knightly resolution to challenge all comers for the cause of Truth, in whose defence he stood, a genuine poet, and a sincere, healthy, wholeman."

At the commemoration service held at the church where he had been pastor, a large concourse, including George Thompson, Lloyd Garrison, and some of the most eminent citizens of Boston and its vicinity were present. The Rev. Mr. Stetson, who delivered the funeral address, said—"He had known the deceased nearly fifty years; he was a great worker; the leading philanthropist of his age for a whole generation. Neither threats nor persuasion could turn him from his line of duty. When asked by the members of his congregation not to speak upon certain 'exciting topics,' his reply was:—'I will stand in a free pulpit, or none: I will speak the whole truth, or not speak at all!' He was imbued with great kindness of heart, warm and tender sympathies, exalted hopes for the race, and possessed of such an indomitable will that he would willingly be reduced to beggary—be thrown aside, sacrificing everything for reform, or such unpopular truths as met with the approbation of his own conscience. As a strenuous advocate of human rights, and freedom for all races, he had left his mark upon the century."

Becoming a Spiritualist late in life, he proclaimed his faith far and wide, in the same brave spirit in which he did everything else. He *lived* to the last hour of his life. His last public act was to preside over the National Convention of Spiritualists, held at Providence, U. S. A., only a few days before his death. A member of that Convention writes:—"We shall never forget his last words to us at the National Convention. Extending his hand, he said, 'Brother, go on; Christ, our Elder Brother is with you; God, the Father, and His angels are with you! Proclaim the ministry of spirits to earth! It is the chief

blessing of my life! Do the work of an Evangelist, and, as far as possible, make our faith practical among men.'"

His first thought in the spirit-world, as his last in this, seems to have been given to the advancement of that knowledge of its verity and power of blissful communion with the beloved of earth which he has now realized. At a gathering of friends in Boston a few days after his mortal decease, his spirit was distinctly seen, taking hold of the arm of an old friend who was present, and who felt the touch, though he did not perceive the presence of the spirit. The lady who had seen the spirit, becoming entranced, the spirit through her, spoke as follows:—

Blessed—thrice blessed—are they who die with a knowledge of the truth.

After a slight pause, the spirit resumed:—

*Brothers and Sisters*—The problem now is solved with me. And because I live, you shall live also; for the same Divine Father and Mother that confers immortality upon one soul, bestows the gift upon all. Oh, I am so joyous to-night, that my soul can scarcely give expression to its thoughts through this weak mortal; and I never realized before how good God is! I regret I cannot portray to you the transcendent beauty of the vision I saw just before I passed to the spirit-world, as my dear ones stretched out their hands to receive me, saying, "Your time has arrived—come home with us." The glories of this new life are beyond description. Language would fail me should I attempt to describe them. Tell those who were in sympathy with me, but not with my belief, that what was then to me a belief, is now a blessed reality. I know that I live, and can return.

Then, addressing the friend, whose arm he had just taken, he said:—

My good brother, go on in the work in which you are engaged, regardless of the derision and scorn of those who do not understand you. Be fearless in the way of right, for Christ our Elder Brother, and God our Father, will ever be with you to bless and sustain you in the noble cause in which you are engaged. Take courage, brother; persevere resolutely, and it will be well with you.

Wm. E. Channing then assumed control, and said:—

It was thought best that our friend and brother, who so recently passed from the mortal to the immortal life, should take this early opportunity to return, and, as far as possible, give expression to the joy which fills his soul; but, as he has himself remarked, no language can make you fully understand the joy that fills his soul. After he had realized that he had changed worlds, he said to us:—"Dear brothers, I am now conscious of the change which has taken place with me. Now take me back to earth, and find me some subject through whom I can communicate with my friends, and thus *prove* true what I have so firmly believed and maintained, namely, that our spirit friends can and do return, identifying themselves to mortals." Pierpont is now the happiest of souls; and his cup of joy seems full to running over. He knows now that he has not been misled, nor mistaken in his faith. The same Power that has sustained him for eighty-one years, was sufficient to bear him safely over the River of Death, leading him to a realization of his faith on earth. His soul is filled with love to God and love to all mankind. He pities and forgives those who ridiculed him on account of his belief, and to those who sympathized with him in religious faith, he says, "Go on in the good work which so interested me, that all may obtain a knowledge of the unseen world; so that when they come to die, they can pass on as peacefully and calmly as I did." Oh, my friends, were I to crave any blessing in your behalf, it would be that your entrance to the spirit-world might be like his.